

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously Presented) A self-ligating orthodontic bracket for coupling an archwire with a tooth, comprising:

a bracket body configured to be mounted to the tooth, said bracket body comprising a non-metallic material;

a metallic insert mounted in said bracket body, said insert including an archwire slot; and

a metallic ligating member coupled with said insert, said ligating member movable relative to said insert between an open position in which the archwire is insertable into said archwire slot and a closed position in which the archwire is retained in said archwire slot.

29. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said non-metallic material is a polymer, a filled polymer composite, or a ceramic.

30. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said non-metallic material is sapphire, polycrystalline aluminum oxide, toughened zirconia, or yttrium-stabilized zirconia.

31. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said non-metallic material is polycarbonate, an acrylic-based thermoplastic resin, or an acrylic thermoset resin.

32. (Currently Amended) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said insert includes a plurality of walls embedded in said non-metallic material of said bracket body, at least

one of said walls of said insert ~~being wedge-shaped for increasing~~ configured to provide increased pull-out resistance of said insert from said bracket body in direction generally perpendicular to the tooth.

33. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 further comprising:
a metallic engagement member capable of constraining movement of said ligating member relative to said bracket body when said ligating member is in the closed position.

34. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said insert further includes at least one guide, and said ligating member is coupled with said at least one guide for movement relative to said insert.

35. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said insert further includes at least one guide, and said ligating member is slidably coupled with said at least one guide for movement relative to said insert.

36. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said archwire slot extends in a mesial/distal direction when said bracket body is mounted to the tooth, and said insert further includes a pair of guides spaced apart in the mesial/distal direction, said ligating member having peripheral edges slidably coupled with said guides for movement relative to said insert.

37. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 further comprising:
a metallic spring arm coupled with said bracket body, said spring arm including a detent configured to engage said ligating member in at least said closed position for constraining movement of said ligating member relative to said bracket body.

38. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 28 wherein said archwire slot extends in a first direction, said insert includes a pair of guides spaced apart in said first direction, said ligating member is movable relative to said guides between said open and

closed positions, and said ligating member retained by said guides to said bracket body and guided by said guides of said insert during movement between said open and closed positions.

39. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 38 wherein said ligating member is guided during movement in a second direction different than said first direction.

40. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 38 wherein said ligating member includes a plurality of peripheral edges, each of said peripheral edges coupled with a respective one of said guides.

41. (Currently Amended) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 40 wherein said ligating member is [[a]] generally planar with a leading edge portion connecting said peripheral edges, said leading edge portion of said ligating member extending between said guides over the archwire slot and abutting said bracket body when said [[slide]] ligating member is in said closed position.

42. (Currently Amended) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 41 wherein said archwire slot includes an opening for inserting the archwire when said [[slide]] ligating member is in said open position, and said leading edge portion of said ligating member abuts a portion of said bracket body proximate to said opening in the closed position.

43. (Currently Amended) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 42 wherein said leading edge portion of said ligating member contacts said bracket body when said ligating member is in said closed position.

44. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 38 wherein said bracket body includes a first side and a second side comprising a bonding base configured for bonding to the tooth, and said guides on said insert project outwardly from said insert on said second side of said bracket body.

45. (Currently Amended) A self-ligating orthodontic bracket for coupling an archwire with a tooth, comprising:

a bracket body configured to be mounted to the tooth, said bracket body comprising a non-metallic material and including an archwire slot; and

a metallic ligating member ~~carried by coupled with~~ said bracket body for sliding movement relative to said bracket body, ~~said ligating member movable relative to said insert~~ between an open position in which the archwire is insertable into said archwire slot and a closed position in which the archwire is retained in said archwire slot.

46. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said non-metallic material is a polymer, a filled polymer composite, or a ceramic.

47. (Previously Presented) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said non-metallic material is sapphire, polycrystalline aluminum oxide, toughened zirconia, or yttrium-stabilized zirconia.

48. (Currently Amended) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 further comprising:
an insert coupled with said bracket body, said insert bounding said archwire slot.

49. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 48 wherein said insert includes a plurality of walls embedded in said non-metallic material of said bracket body, at least one of said walls of said insert configured to provide increased pull-out resistance of said insert from said bracket body in direction generally perpendicular to the tooth.

50. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 further comprising:

a metallic engagement member capable of constraining movement of said ligating member relative to said bracket body when said ligating member is in the closed position.

51. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said bracket body further includes at least one guide, and said ligating member is slidably coupled with said at least one guide for movement relative to said bracket body.

52. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said archwire slot extends in a mesial/distal direction when said bracket body is mounted to the tooth, and said bracket body further includes a pair of guides spaced apart in the mesial/distal direction, said ligating member having peripheral edges slidably coupled with said guides for movement relative to said bracket body.

53. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 further comprising:
a metallic spring arm coupled with said bracket body, said spring arm including a detent configured to engage said ligating member in at least said closed position for constraining movement of said ligating member relative to said bracket body.

54. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said archwire slot extends in a first direction, said bracket body includes a pair of guides spaced apart in said first direction, said ligating member is movable relative to said guides between said open and closed positions, and said ligating member retained by said guides to said bracket body and guided by said guides of said bracket body during movement between said open and closed positions.

55. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 54 wherein said ligating member is guided during movement in a second direction different than said first direction.

56. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 54 wherein said ligating member includes a plurality of peripheral edges, each of said peripheral edges coupled with a respective one of said guides.

57. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 56 wherein said ligating member is generally planar with a leading edge portion connecting said peripheral edges, said leading edge portion of said ligating member extending between said guides over the archwire slot and abutting said bracket body when said ligating member is in said closed position.

58. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 57 wherein said archwire slot includes an opening for inserting the archwire when said ligating member is in said open position, and said leading edge portion of said ligating member abuts a portion of said bracket body proximate to said opening in the closed position.

59. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 58 wherein said leading edge portion of said ligating member contacts said bracket body when said ligating member is in said closed position.

60. (New) The self-ligating orthodontic bracket of claim 45 wherein said bracket body includes a first side and a second side comprising a bonding base configured for bonding to the tooth, and said guides on said bracket body project outwardly from said bracket body on said second side of said bracket body.